

Serial No.: 09/472,534
Group Art Unit: 2666
Examiner: Melanie Jagannathan

REMARKS

Claims 16 through 26 are currently pending. It is requested that the application be reconsidered and allowed in view of the following remarks.

The Office Action rejected claims 16 through 26 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,479,608 to Richardson et al. (the "Richardson" reference). However, this reference fails to disclose or suggest the requirements of the claims.

Independent Claim 16 and Dependent Claims 17 through 22

Independent claim 16 states, "receiving one or more working channels and at least one protection channel at an input interface to the transmission switch; performing a selection at the input interface between the working and protection channels in response to a signal quality of the working and protection channels; and switching the selected ones of the working and protection channels through one or more pre-determined matrix connections in a matrix in the transmission switch, wherein the pre-determined matrix connections are not disrupted due to the selection at the input interface between the working and protection channels."

The Richardson reference fails to disclose, *inter alia*, the requirement of claim 16 of, "switching the selected ones of the working and protection channels through one or more pre-determined matrix connections in a matrix in the transmission switch, wherein the pre-determined matrix connections are not disrupted due to the selection at the input interface between the working and protection channels." For example, at column 10, lines 43 through 45, in response to a signal failure at Ma11, the Richardson reference states that, "If input head port B11 has a valid signal, process 46 [of Figure 5a] is then performed by which IPU 16₃ in node B effects a third stage bridge (3SBR) in first/third stage 20₃," as seen in Figure 3b. In addition, the Richardson reference states at column 11, lines 6 through 11 that, "Upon receipt of the 'good' signal at protection input port PAI, in process 38 node A performs a first stage switch at first/third stage 20₁, switching the facility now being received at protection input port PAI to

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center matrix stage 22A in place of the failed facility previously received at member input port MA11."

The Office Action states that "predetermined cross-connects (elements A1-Aj, B1-Bk) are maintained." The Office Action then states "See columns 6 through 11". Applicants respectfully request a more precise citation and explanation of the rejection from the Examiner. It is unclear what specific portions of columns 6 through 11 (3 pages of the patent) are the basis of the rejection. As explained above with specific citations from columns 10 and 11, the Richardson reference does not illustrate the requirements of the claim.

Independent Claim 23 and Dependent Claim 24

The Richardson reference fails to disclose the requirement, *inter alia*, of claim 23 of, "in response to a line failure, routing information on inbound working channel to outbound protection channel and routing information on inbound protection channel to outbound working channel at an input/output interface, wherein routing of the working and protection channels at the input/output interface prevents information from being provided to the matrix such that the matrix connections are not disrupted." For example, at column 10, lines 43 through 45, in response to a signal failure at MA11, the Richardson reference states that, "If input head port B11 has a valid signal, process 46 [of Figure 5a] is then performed by which IPU 16₃ in node B effects a third stage bridge (3SBR) in first/third stage 20₃," as seen in Figure 3b. In addition, the Richardson reference states at column 11, lines 6 through 11 that, "Upon receipt of the 'good' signal at protection input port PAI, in process 38 node A performs a first stage switch at first/third stage 20₁, switching the facility now being received at protection input port PAI to center matrix stage 22A in place of the failed facility previously received at member input port MA11."

In its rejection, the Office Action merely refers to node A and B and Figures 3b-3e and columns 6 through 11. Applicants respectfully request a more precise citation and explanation of the rejection from the Examiner. It is unclear what specific portions of columns 6 through 11 (3 pages of the patent) are the basis of the rejection. As explained above with specific citations

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from columns 10 and 11 and referring to Figures 3b-3e, the Richardson reference does not illustrate the requirements of the claim.

Independent Claim 25 and dependent Claim 26

The Richardson reference also fails to disclose the requirement, inter alia, of claim 25 of, "a switching matrix that switches the selected one of the inbound working and protection channels over a pre-determined matrix connection, wherein the pre-determined matrix connection is not disrupted in response to the selection of the inbound working and protection channel." For example, at column 10, lines 43 through 45, in response to a signal failure at MA11, the Richardson reference states that, "If input head port B1I has a valid signal, process 46 [of Figure 5a] is then performed by which IPU 16₃ in node B effects a third stage bridge (3SBR) in first/third stage 20₃," as seen in Figure 3b. In addition, the Richardson reference states at column 11, lines 6 through 11 that, "Upon receipt of the 'good' signal at protection input port PAI, in process 38 node A performs a first stage switch at first/third stage 20₁, switching the facility now being received at protection input port PAI to center matrix stage 22A in place of the failed facility previously received at member input port MA11."

The Office Action states in paragraph 2 that "predetermined cross-connects (elements A1-Aj, B1-Bk) are maintained." The Office Action then states "See columns 6 through 11". Applicants respectfully request a more precise citation and explanation of the rejection from the Examiner. It is unclear what specific portions of columns 6 through 11 (3 pages of the patent) are the basis of the rejection. As explained above with specific citations from columns 10 and 11, the Richardson reference does not illustrate the requirements of the claim.

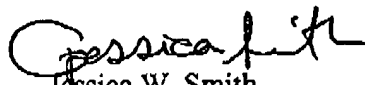
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Conclusion

For the above reasons, claims 16 through 26 are patentable under 35 U.S.C. 102 over the Richardson reference. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of the claims be withdrawn and full allowance granted. Should the Examiner have any further comments or suggestions, please contact Jessica Smith at (972) 477-9109.

Respectfully submitted,

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